



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

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***Testimony of Department of Motor Vehicles
Commissioner Melody A. Currey
Transportation Committee Public Hearing
February 20, 2013***

Proposed S.B. No.137 AN ACT EXPANDING THE ISSUANCE OF PERMITS FOR PARKING SPACES DESIGNATED FOR PERSONS WHO ARE BLIND AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO PERSONS WITH CERTAIN MENTAL DISABILITIES.

Good morning Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, Senator Boucher, Representative Scribner and other members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on proposed S.B. No.137, AN ACT EXPANDING THE ISSUANCE OF PERMITS FOR PARKING SPACES DESIGNATED FOR PERSONS WHO ARE BLIND AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO PERSONS WITH CERTAIN MENTAL DISABILITIES.

While the Department understands the intent of this proposed legislation, we urge you to weigh several factors in your analysis of this bill. First, the bill does not specify which mental disabilities would be encompassed in this expansion of the placard provisions. It refers to a "mental disability which limits or impairs such applicant's ability to walk."

Unlike the standards for a physical disability that impairs the ability to walk, which are set forth in federal law, there are no standards for a mental disability that impairs the ability to walk. The Department believes the issuance of these placards would be extremely subjective, opening a floodgate for access to these permits.

The Department believes that if you open this door, this will soon be followed by other groups that will seek placards. In fact, there is a bill pending that requests these placards for all pregnant women. The effect of these proposals is that people who are physically unable to walk will be competing with an ever expanding universe for access to the limited number of parking spaces that exist. It also increases the potential for abuse of the placards, a problem to which the Department has devoted a great deal of attention over the past few years.

This proposal also places a burden on Department resources due to the increased number of applications that it will be required to review and process.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify on this proposed legislation.